

SHARECROPPERS' VOICE

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOUTHERN TENANT FARMERS' UNION

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GREETINGS, DELEGATES!

TENANCY COMMITTEE HEARS DEMANDS OF TENANT FARMERS

W. L. Blackstone, organizer for the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, has been added to the Committee on Farm Tenancy appointed by President Roosevelt. As a result of the activity of the Union, the United States has been forced to face the question of farm tenancy and find a way of giving the land back to the people.

The appointment of Blackstone to the Committee is a recognition that the Union is a power in the movement to end the condition of tenancy and that its point of view must be heard by the Government.

Hearings

At hearings held by the President's Committee in Dallas, Texas, and in Montgomery, Alabama, representatives of the Union gave the point of view of sharecroppers and farm workers. They insisted that the Government take steps, not only to protect the rights of Union members and other workers, but also to see to it that the Union's slogan, "Land to the landless!" is carried out.

In both cities, the Union presented statements to the Committee, describing conditions in different parts of the country, and pointing out how they can be remedied. Spokesmen for the union told the Committee that "the present sharecropper system lends itself to dishonesty and inefficiency."

Discussing methods of ending the conditions that are so common in the South, they said: "No inroads upon tenancy can be made by lifting a few men to the status of landlords. Only by making large numbers of men homeowners can any significant inroads be made."

Cooperation

They asked the government to set up a new kind of farm organization—"a community or village farm economy based on the idea of cooperation and mutual assistance."

Large numbers of people attended the meetings of the Committee to hear what was being proposed, and almost all who spoke agreed with the statement made by Howard Kester, member of the Union's Executive Council:

"We are not a stagnant people and the patterns of thought and habit which served our fathers, no longer serve us. We have arrived at one of those epochs in human history when we must either move on to newer fields or perish. The people are in no mood to perish and the time has arrived for those who control the economic and social destiny of this land to recognize the situation for what it is and promises to become if not speedily remedied."

THEY HEAR THE UNION'S SIDE



Courtesy Dallas Times-Herald.

J. R. Butler, president of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, discussing the problem of the sharecroppers and farm workers with members of President Roosevelt's Special Committee on Farm Tenancy. President Butler is seated in the center.

Mitchell's Report to Convention Shows Union Successes in 1936

By H. L. MITCHELL
Executive Secretary, STFU

The Southern Tenant Farmers Union has come a long way, but we still have a long way to go. Our goal is before us, and we cannot stop until the dispossessed, the landless sharecroppers, tenants and other farmers come into their own.

There are many obstacles that we must overcome before we can reach that goal. We live in the midst of a dying social order; our problems are bound up with those of other workers throughout the world. But our main concern, of course, is with the problems of the cotton economy of the Southland.

We know that cotton has always been a slave crop. We know, too, that the markets of the world, formerly supplied with American cotton, are fast being lost to us. New fields are being developed; policies of self-centered nationalism are rife throughout the world. Nations are developing their own colonies and dependencies which can produce cotton. Substitutes for cotton are coming into widespread use.

We must look ahead and try to visualize the future. If American growers are to meet the increasing competition, then the cost of producing cotton must be reduced. We are already on a bare subsistence—wages and our part of the products of our toil cannot be cut lower. We, the people who raise the cotton, have no choice but to starve or fight.

The Southern Tenant Farmers Union is making the struggle for the very existence of our people. What faces us in the South today, where cotton has been King, is a toppling throne. We are giving it a push so that in its place we can build a better life.

THE FUTURE

What does the future hold for us? If we look about us we see the following: First, there is a decided trend to day labor. Great plantations and landholdings are being gathered together by corporations and wealthy individuals. Hundreds of tractors are being

brought in. One tractor can displace perhaps four tenants or sharecroppers and only one day laborer is required to man the machine. Labor costs are cut and cotton is produced more cheaply. Wages are beaten down to the lowest levels; an abundant supply of excess labor is at hand; and the government is called upon to supply relief.

Some of the delegates at this convention from the West Texas plains can tell you the effects of large scale commercial tractor-farming—how many of them, former prosperous tenants or even landowners, have been evicted from the land. What is happening in West Texas is happening in Arkansas, in Southeastern Missouri, in the Mississippi Delta.

What are the people to do who have lost their means of living? The government will not support them in the "pity work," as our miner friends call WPA. Outlets for excess labor must be found. In Oklahoma and down in Eastern and Southern Texas, land is

(Continued on Page 2)

CONVENTION WILL PLAN 1937 WORK

The Third Annual Convention of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union opens in Muskogee, Oklahoma, on January 14 and will close on January 17. From all over the cotton country in the South, sharecroppers and tenant farmers will gather together, to talk over the problems of their organization and to work out methods of meeting them.

Preparing for the new tasks ahead, the delegates will discuss ways and means of building their organization further and making it even stronger than it now is. Since the last convention, the Union has led a successful strike of cotton choppers in Eastern Arkansas with the result that the planters had to raise the pay in that section to as high as \$1.25 for picking cotton. As the Department of Agriculture reported, prices in other places averaged 6 cents.

Successes

With such a history of success behind it, as well as an impressive job of educational work, the winning of fair settlements for sharecroppers, the defense of many cases and the conviction of Peacher for slavery, the Union convention will make plans for the future.

The delegates, who will come from such different states as Arkansas, Tennessee, Missouri, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas, will meet in the Convention Hall on Main Street, in Muskogee, Oklahoma.

Many visitors are expected from all over the United States, including friends of the Union who have helped to win better conditions for the sharecroppers. All over the country, people are interested in the organization which has brought the question of farm tenancy to the attention of the nation with the result that commissions have been appointed by governors and by the President to study the situation and find a solution.

Prominent speakers from labor unions, colleges, and even government departments, will address the convention. Many messages of greeting and congratulation have already been received by the national office from leading people in America.

At the closing session of the convention, the regular Ceremony of the Land, will be performed, with all the delegates and visitors taking part. (The Ceremony of the Land is printed in this issue of The Sharecropper's Voice, on page 3.)

CONVENTION REPORT

(Continued from Page 1)

being planted in vegetables, and truck gardening of all sorts is under way, all on a large scale. These areas can compete well with other sections of the country because they have an abundant supply of cheap labor in the towns and cities, consisting of dispossessed and evicted sharecroppers and tenants from the cotton plantations.

Inviting Exploitation

Down in the state of Mississippi, the legislature has enacted a law authorizing towns and cities to build factories and has broadcast an invitation to all sweatshop operators and exploiters of labor to come South.

"Come South," says the Governor of Mississippi, "and exploit our people. Take our evicted sharecroppers and tenants into the factories which we have prepared for you! Work them long hours. Drive them hard, for low wages will seem high to them. They know nothing of unions. Here is an opportunity for you to escape the militant labor unions in the textile and clothing industries. The garments that workers can make in these factories can be sold below the cost of production in other parts of the country. Raw materials are here, and plenty of cheap electric power."

The Memphis Chamber of Commerce distributes a document which says that "Memphis may be considered as non-union" and that labor there "is not prone to organize in matters of wages and working conditions." It adds that its sources of supply are "from the tenant class of farmers in Tri-State, comprising Tennessee, Mississippi and Arkansas." Such is the gleeful boast.

Our Answer

What is the answer of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union to these challenges? Our answer is to organize—to organize all agricultural workers in vegetable fields as well as cotton, to go into the little towns and organize the part-time WPA worker, to increase the number of good union men, workers who won't scab on their fellow-workers, who will co-operate with all labor organizations. We will help make it possible for all Southern workers to continue to live by constantly struggling for a better living for all. To other labor organizations, we must pledge our co-operation, doing the work for which we are best fitted. To organize the South is the immediate task. To the miners, clothing workers, textile mill workers, we say: "We pave the way for you; lend us your aid."

We believe that all workers have a common cause. We affirm our faith in the necessity of uniting all who work for a living in



H. L. MITCHELL

order to achieve their common objectives. We therefore stand ready to co-operate with all workers in agriculture and industry, regardless of race, creed or nationality.

OUR STRUGGLE

The second annual convention of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union closed on January 5th, 1936, with members returning to their locals to report the proceedings. Immediately there was a wave of enthusiasm aroused throughout our territory. New locals were organized. Preparations were made to engage in a struggle on a larger scale than ever before. Farm workers rallied everywhere to the support of the cause which they recognized as their own. Labor as represented by the American Federation of Labor, the United Mine Workers and others, had given their pledge to aid and support the valiant efforts of our people to secure some measure of justice for themselves.

The powerful owners of the Eastern Arkansas plantations threw down the gauntlet for a fight to the finish. Nearly 200 union families were given eviction notices. Some were evicted and thrown upon the roadside in bitter, cold weather. Women and children huddled around camp fires, seeking to protect themselves from the terrible winter. Blacklists were openly circulated, union members were even driven off government farms on account of union membership. A call was sent to Washington for relief. In fairness to officials in Washington, let it be said that they were sympathetic and ordered that relief be given. Local administrators, however, simply ignored the orders. So-called investigations were made, reports were sent sub-

stantiating our charges, but nothing was done.

The Public Helps

We appealed to the American public for aid. Hundreds of dollars worth of food, clothing and shelter were administered through union channels. There is not one case, as far as we have been able to determine, of any of our people ever receiving help through governmental sources. We reached hundreds of people, bringing to them food, clothing and shelter, of a sort. There were many who were in need that we could not reach.

A distinguished scientist, touched by the plight of so many of our people, went out into the field with a relief-loaded car, finding a mother and her children living in the open in bitter weather. Help was given. The good woman, in her own way, thanked God for the help she received. The gentleman told her to thank the Union too. She replied: "Thank God for the Union."

Jim Ball

A union meeting at St. Peter's Church was raided by plantation deputies on January 15th. The doorkeeper, Jim Ball, who attempted to prevent violence was arrested. The "Laws" returned, shooting two other members as they walked along the roadside. Jim Ball, who had been thrown in jail, was charged with assault with intent to kill, and a material witness to the attack on the union men, Willie Hurst, was later murdered by masked men. Jim Ball was sent to prison, a victim of a frame-up. Everett Hood, one of the deputies, was censured by the Arkansas Supreme Court for violating the right of the people to free assemblage.

This Convention should go on record demanding the release of Jim Ball now serving sentence on the Tucker Farm, because Jim Ball is innocent of any crime and if Hurst had not been murdered but permitted to testify, even the planters' Court would not have dared to convict.

A few days later, another Union meeting, this time in the town of Earle, Ark., was raided by a band of planters. The Providence Methodist Church, scene of the meeting, was literally wrecked as men, women and children were clubbed. Howard Kester and Herman Goldberger, our former attorney now deceased, narrowly escaped lynching. The so-called "Laws," deputy sheriffs, etc., were at the same time closeted with the District Attorney for Eastern Arkansas in the town of Earle, while the raid was in progress. No official effort to this date has ever been made to bring these outlaws to justice.

(The second section of this report will appear in the next issue of the VOICE and will tell the thrilling story of the strike and the heroism of the Union members. It will also deal with other activities of the Union.)

Peacher Pays Fine In Slavery Charge

Paul D. Peacher, of Earle, Ark., who was convicted of keeping people in slavery, has paid his fine of \$3,500 to the United States Government.

Known to many as "Mr. Peaches," he is now reported to be a plain, ordinary citizen, and no longer the "Law" in Earle. Since he paid his fine, he is out on probation, and can be made to serve two years in the federal jail if he causes any disturbance.

The Southern Tenant Farmers Union had charged him with arresting Union members during the cotton choppers' strike last summer and forcing them into peonage. As a result, the federal government indicted him for the crime, and a jury found him guilty.

Peacher is one of the first men

who have committed crimes against sharecroppers and have been punished themselves by the law. Cases are still coming up against others, including the Earle floggers who beat Willie Sue Blagden, Jim Reese and Eliza Nolden.

There are hundreds of other Peachers who should be brought to justice. They are now afraid that the law will catch up with them, just as it caught up with "Mr. Peaches."

NOTE TO READERS

The pressure of work in connection with the Convention has made it impossible for us to publish this issue sooner. We are therefore designating this the January issue and will extend all subscriptions by one issue.

The Workers Defense League pledges its aid to the Southern Tenant Farmers Union in the struggles that lie ahead.

Your courage and determination assure you of victory.

WORKERS DEFENSE LEAGUE

112 East 19th Street
New York City

Greetings From

NORMAN THOMAS

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE U. S. A. hails the gains of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union registered at your third annual convention. The membership of the Socialist Party stands shoulder to shoulder with you in your class-conscious demands.

Land to the Landless!
Freedom and Plenty for All!
Down with Capitalism and Its Bosses!
Up with the Banner of a Workers' Cooperative World!

National Headquarters SOCIALIST PARTY
549 Randolph St., Chicago, Illinois

The Socialist Party of Missouri wishes success to the SOUTHERN TENANT FARMERS UNION in their struggle for better living conditions.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF MISSOURI

Solidarity and increased strength to the
Southern Tenant Farmers Union

MARY W. HILLYER

Greetings from the

Monongahela Valley Central Trades Council

517 MCKEAN AVENUE, CHARLEROI, PENNA.
PATRONIZE UNION LABELS!

Greetings From
Boot & Shoe Workers
Union
Local 521
Moberly, Missouri

Greetings and Best Wishes
Suitcase, Bag and
Portfolio Makers Union
Local 48

Greetings!

SAMUEL S. WHITE
DALLAS, TEXAS

Your Friend

ED KOLL
EAST PEORIA, ILL.

"Thoughts have gone forth
whose
Powers can sleep no more!
Victory! Victory!"
SHELLEY—The Revolt of
Islam

Your fight is my fight

L. B. HETRICK
Elwood, Ind.
A FARMER

GREETINGS FROM
M. V. S. L.
Print Shop
UNION PRINTERS
Yellow Springs, Ohio

Greetings From
**Barberton Central
Labor Union**
BARBERTON, OHIO

THE CEREMONY OF THE LAND

READER:

"Bowed by the weight of centuries he leans
Upon his hoe and gazes on the ground,
The emptiness of ages in his face,
And on his back the burden of the world."

AUDIENCE:

"Who made him dead to rapture and despair . . .

"Stolid and stunned, a brother to the ox?"

READER: "The status of tenancy demands complete dependence. The landlord assumes the prerogative of direction in the choice of crop, the method by which it shall be cultivated, and how and when and where it shall be sold. He keeps the records and determines the earnings. Through the commissary or credit merchant, even the choice of diet is determined. The landlord can determine the kind and amount of schooling for the children, the extent to which they may share benefits intended for all the people. He may even determine the relief they receive in the extremity of their distress. He controls the courts, the agencies of law enforcement, and can effectively thwart any efforts at organization to protect their meager rights."

AUDIENCE: "It is you who have eaten up the land; the spoil of the poor is in your houses; what mean ye that you crush my people and grind the faces of the poor?" Isa. 3-14, 15.

READER: "The South hasn't had enough pay since the Civil War to advance a single step in civilization. Whole families live on twenty-five cents a day. . . . Since the Civil War, whether white or colored, the sharecropper has been the equivalent of slave labor." "Whenever I travel through the Cotton Belt—the things that haunt me most are the ragged tenants, wrinkled wives, half fed, anaemic children and the wretched hovels in which they live, whether white or Negro. For the past fifty years cotton has been produced out of the very life blood of the South."

AUDIENCE: "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness and his chambers by injustice; that useth his neighbor's service without wages and giveth him not his hire." Je. 22:13.

READER: "In the cotton fields of the South is the most stark serfdom that is left anywhere in the western world. The sharecropper is a man who possesses as near to nothing as any man in the United States." "He has no such rights as peasants had acquired in the Middle Ages under Feudalism." "The landlord owns the land, the implements and the mules and sometimes by an unwritten law the sharecropper himself."

AUDIENCE: "Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field till there be no room, and ye be made to dwell alone in the midst of the land." Isa. 5:8.

READER: "I have travelled over most of Europe and part of Africa but I have never seen such terrible sights as I saw among the sharecroppers. . . . Here are people of good stock, potential members of a great community, and they are being treated worse than animals, worse than farming implements and stock. They are not shiftless, they want to work. They want to live decently as workers; but even the right to work is denied them. They seem to be denied all their rights."

AUDIENCE: "And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter." Isa. 59:14.

READER: "Come now, you rich men, weep and shriek over your impending miseries! You have been storing up treasure in the very last days; your wealth lies rotting, your gold and silver lie rusted over, and their rust will be evidence against you. See the wages of which you have defrauded the workmen who mowed your fields call out, and the cries of the harvesters reached the ears of the Lord of the Armies of Heaven." James 5.

AUDIENCE: "Woe unto them who decree unrighteous decrees . . . who turn aside the needy from justice, and rob the poor of my people of their rights." Is. 10:1.

READER: "We live in a land of plenty and yet we receive only \$4.00 ration per month for those who work and there is nothing allowed for small children, and babies, and on 60c a day a man is supposed to support a family and what if he should fail to get out of debt which for the last five years has been the case? In the summer there is not enough food to feed our hungry mouths and in winter we have no money to buy

Arranged By
HOWARD KESTER and EVELYN SMITH



clothes to cover our naked bodies. Our babies cry for milk and our children grow up in ignorance. Our school house is falling down and there are no windows or doors and the floor is warped up in the middle. We have no school books and no money to buy any. Our houses are unfit for mules to live in. The landlord oppresses us, robs us of our wages when he wants to. We have members that are homeless and have no place to go."

AUDIENCE: "Yesterday we begged for mercy, today we demand justice!"

READER: "There is only one hopeful thing about the situation and that is the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union. Here one may see the truest human values, brotherhood and loyalty and immense courage in the face of danger and here something has happened of terrific historical importance. For the first time in the history of the United States, perhaps in the history of the world, the white and colored people are working together in a common cause with complete trust and friendship. They are working together for what is supposed to be everyone's birthright—a decent standard of living, education, security, hope for the future. At present they have none of these things; their only hope of getting them is through their union. The central government failed them. It is quite clear that the planters want to keep the sharecroppers in a state of slavery. Up to now they have managed to do this. But the eyes of the world are on them. For the sake of all that we value in civilization, the present state of things has got to be finished."

AUDIENCE: "And God hath made of one blood all the races of men to dwell together on the face of the earth." We who are Indians lived here before other races came and drove us from our homes and land. Now we are disinherited. We who are Negroes were brought from our native homes in chains. We have always been landless. We who are white men came to make ourselves homes. We are now homeless and landless. We who are Mexicans were lured here by promises of a better life. Now we are homeless and as strangers in a strange land. Together we cry, LAND FOR THE LANDLESS.

AUDIENCE: "Let justice roll down as the waters and righteousness as a mighty stream." ALL POWER TO THE SOUTHERN TENANT FARMERS' UNION!

READER: "Today we face a world struggling to be born. A world of freedom, justice and plenty where none shall be oppressed and none shall go hungry or cold. The day dawns. We march each day toward tomorrow with a clear faith in ourselves, our Union, and the things for which we struggle."

AUDIENCE: "Our road has been hard, our pathway filled with trouble and the trail over which we have come filled with tears but we have not faltered nor turned back."

READER:

"Some of our brothers lie dead.

Some languish in jail.

Some are rotting out their lives on prison farms.

Some have been exiled from their native land. We all live on death-colored wages.

Their wives and children are a testimony against the terror and misery of King Cotton's tottering Empire."

AUDIENCE:

"Establish justice. . . . Create plenty.

Abolish tenancy. . . . Destroy poverty.

All power to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

READER: "We face the future with all those who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, who hate tyranny and oppression and who love justice, truth and beauty."

AUDIENCE: "All power to the disinherited everywhere."

All power to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

READER: "By struggling eternally for one another we shall dry the ancient tears of the oppressed, dry up the wells of despair and hopelessness and build a world free from poverty, tyranny and want."

AUDIENCE: "Let us press forward to the land of our dreams. All power to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union."

READER: "Yesterday we did not see the land of promise which offers to all men, women and children a full and abundant life, today we behold it and with firm feet march toward it; tomorrow we shall rise up and seize it."

AUDIENCE: "To the disinherited belongs the future."

READER: "And the land shall not be sold in perpetuity." Lev. 25:23.

AUDIENCE: "Land and Justice—Justice and Land."

READER: "The land is the common heritage of the people."

AUDIENCE: Land to the Landless.

READER: "To the disinherited belongs the future."

AUDIENCE: "All power to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union!"

CEREMONY

READER: Delegates to the annual convention of the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union, march one by one to receive a portion of this earth brought by your brother delegates from the states in which they struggle for a better life. Gather now a few grains from the soil of Mississippi, Arkansas, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Texas, where the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union is a living force. Mingle these grains in one heap—as a symbol of the land on which we live and labor. This bit of earth is to be taken as a token of that for which we are united in struggle.

CLOSING

READER: For seventy years we have been the victims of a semi-slave system known as sharecropping which at times is more brutal and humiliating than chattel slavery itself. For years our oppressors kept us divided and made us struggle against our own brothers. By so doing they made slaves of us all. Today a new light has come to our eyes, a new understanding to our minds and we no longer struggle against one another, but we struggle together against our oppressors, knowing that out of a dark and gloomy past, as we struggle together, we shall gain the things for which our hearts long. By means of this ceremony we have dedicated our lives to the task of securing land, freedom and bread. Divided we stand but united in struggle in the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union we shall inherit that for which we have yearned, labored and died. All power to the Southern Tenant Farmers' Union.

AUDIENCE: The land is the common heritage of the people.

READER: Land to the landless.

AUDIENCE: To the disinherited belongs the future.

Reader and Audience join in repeating the following prayer:

"SPEED NOW THE DAY WHEN THE PLAINS AND THE HILLS AND ALL THE WEALTH THEREOF SHALL BE THE PEOPLE'S OWN AND FREE MEN SHALL NOT LIVE AS TENANTS OF MEN ON THE EARTH WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN TO ALL." Amen.

"The Voice of The Disinherited"
The Sharecroppers' Voice

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 Southern Tenant Farmers' Union

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THE CONVENTION

We come to our Third Annual Convention a much stronger organization than we ever dreamed we could become in such a short space of time. In three years of life, members of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union have won great victories, and have made the whole country sit up and take notice of the conditions of the sharecroppers and other farm laborers.

In many cases, fair settlements have been gained for individual tenant farmers who were in danger of being cheated by their landlords; in other cases, fair settlements were given only because the landlords realized that they would have to deal with organized workers instead of with individuals.

Higher prices have been paid to day laborers in the sections where the Union is strongly organized. Efforts to convict union members on trumped-up charges have been blocked by our defense machinery. The Southern Tenant Farmers Union has been responsible for bringing to the attention of the American people the fact that slavery still exists in some parts of the country, and we have already succeeded in bringing about the conviction and punishment of Paul D. Peacher, city marshal of Earle, Ark., on charges of peonage.

This Third Annual Convention will not only hear reports of what has been done in the past. It will make plans for the work that is ahead. Sharecroppers and farm laborers from six states, at least, will come together to work out a program for the coming year to make the organization even stronger by building up its membership and its locals, by educating them to meet their problems and by preparing for new tasks.

Good luck, delegates! Build the Southern Tenant Farmers Union!

THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION

President Roosevelt has appointed a commission to investigate the subject of farm tenancy and to propose a way out. On that commission, he has appointed a member of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union.

It was only because the sharecroppers had organized into the Union that it became possible for such things to happen. When they were unorganized and tried to do things for themselves as individuals, they were helpless. But when they got together and decided to work together for the common good, the whole country had to pay attention.

The members of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union are doing more than just organizing to win better conditions. They also have a program to end farm tenancy so that the people who work on the land shall be the owners and get the benefit of their labor. Even if the President's Commission does not decide to recommend the program of the Union as the way out of the misery of the people, the members of the Union will go on fighting for their program. They know that the land must be given back to the people.

PARDON JIM BALL!

Many months ago Jim Ball was thrown into jail on a framed-up charge. When planters raided a union meeting and shot two members, they also arrested Jim Ball. They committed assaults on union members, and then charged a union man with assault with intent to kill.

Everybody knew that Jim Ball was innocent of the charge. The judge who sentenced him to seven years knew it. The judges who heard the appeal and who finally reduced his sentence to one year knew it. The Governor of Arkansas who refused to set him free knew it.

This month a new Governor will take office in Arkansas. The Southern Tenant Farmers Union is placing before him all the facts in the case and he too will know that Jim Ball is innocent. An application will be made for a pardon so that this victim of planter-injustice can take his place in the world of free men.

Facts were never plainer. Truth never spoke louder than it speaks for Jim Ball.

The duty of the newly-elected Governor is clear. He must save his state from the disgrace of keeping an innocent man in prison.

Arkansas must give Jim Ball his freedom!

COOPERATIVE CLUBS STUDIED BY LOCALS

Locals of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union are studying the subject of Consumers Cooperation in order to be able to open their own stores in the future and escape from the cheating commissary stores. Union members in Tahoka, Texas, hope to be the first to start their own "buying club."

The Union has sent out to the locals material on consumers co-operation, prepared by the United States Government. (If your local didn't receive it, write to the national office.)

Executive-secretary H. L. Mitchell, in a letter to the locals, which went out with the little books on cooperation, wrote:

"This little book tells the inspiring story of the Rochdale pioneers. The Rochdale workers were employed in the cotton mills of a little town in England. There they started the most successful of all cooperative stores—stores which they themselves owned and operated.

Rochdale Plan

"The weavers of Rochdale were much worse off than sharecroppers, tenants and other farm laborers are today. It is our belief—and the belief of many people throughout America—that we who work in the cotton fields can do for ourselves what others have done before us.

"We do not want you to set up a co-operative store without first learning the many things there are to know about the cooperative idea. Become educated and then we will help you in working out plans for betterment. We do not advise the setting up of stores right away. Let us learn more about it before we start.

"A number of locals have already made the first steps. Buying clubs have been started and have proved very successful."

No local should start a cooperative or a buying club without first notifying the national office and getting further information.

COURT POSTPONES BENSON APPEAL

The case of David M. Benson, organizer for the Workers Alliance of America, who was fined \$1,060 last summer for helping the Southern Tenant Farmers Union during the cotton choppers' strike, will come up on appeal March 15.

Benson was charged with "enticing labor," and driving a car without an Arkansas license. Though the case had come up for re-trial this month, the court postponed it. C. A. Stanfield, attorney for the Union, who is defending Benson, is asking for a change of venue so that the trial will not be held in Forrest City. At the first hearing, a mob of planters threatened the lives of Benson and his lawyer.

The Union is determined to see that justice is done and will appeal the case to the Supreme Court of the United States, if necessary, in order to have the law against "enticing labor" declared unconstitutional. Under that law, practically all strikes can be made illegal.

It is expected, however, that the courts will throw the case out rather than be embarrassed by it any longer.



**TAKE OFF THE BLIND BRIDLE!
 REMOVE THE GAG!
 JOIN THE UNION!**

If you are not a member of the Southern Tenant Farmers Union, fill out the coupon on this page and join at once. Become a free man!

Roll the Union On

(To the tune of "Polly-Wolly-Doodle All Day")

If the planters in the way, we goin' to roll it over them,
 Go in' to roll it over them.
 If the planters in the way, we goin' to roll it over them,
 Go in' to roll it over them.

Chorus: Go in' to roll, goin' to roll, goin' to roll the union on,
 Go in' to roll, goin' to roll, goin' to roll the union on.

If the bosses in the way, we goin' to roll it over them,
 Go in' to roll it over them.
 If the bosses in the way, we goin' to roll it over them,
 Go in' to roll the union on.

Chorus

If the merchants in the way, goin' to roll it over them,
 Go in' to roll it over them.
 If the merchants in the way, goin' to roll it over them,
 Go in' to roll the union on.

Chorus

If the bankers in the way, goin' to roll it over them,
 Go in' to roll it over them.
 If the bankers in the way, goin' to roll it over them,
 Go in' to roll the union on.

Chorus

If Peaches in the way, goin' to roll it over him,
 Go in' to roll it over him.
 If Peaches in the way, goin' to roll it over him,
 Go in' to roll the union on.

Chorus

If Futrell in the way, goin' to roll it over him,
 Go in' to roll it over him.
 If Futrell in the way, goin' to roll it over him,
 Go in' to roll the union on.

Chorus

If Wall Street in the way, goin' to roll it over them,
 Go in' to roll it over them.
 If Wall Street in the way, goin' to roll it over them,
 Go in' to roll the union on.

Chorus

JOIN THE UNION!

SOUTHERN TENANT FARMERS' UNION.
 Box 5215, Memphis, Tenn.

Please tell me how I can join the Union.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____